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# U.S. spy strategem set trap for Stalin

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From Chicago Daily News

An out-of-control U.S. espionage operation is blamed for a major role in the deaths of 1,000 eastern European leaders 25 years ago.

The charge comes in a book, "Operation Splinter Factor," by British journalist Stewart Steven, published today. Steven says Splinter Factor was the name of a plan to undermine Russian faith in its satellite leaders by hinting that some were U.S. spies.

But the cold war plan fed Russian leader Joseph Stalin's paranoia and became so successful that the United States lost control over which leaders would be denounced, Steven says.

"Hundreds were killed by that deadly combination of Joseph Stalin and Operation Splinter Factor," Steven writes. "We know that at least 100,000 men, women and children directly suffered, of whom about 1,000 were put to death."

The driving force behind the 1949 plan, according to Steven, was Allen Dulles, a powerful figure in the U.S. Intelligence community and later head of the CIA. It was aided by Jozef Swiatlo, a high ranking member of the Polish Secret Police and a U.S. spy.

Splinter Factor's purpose was to free the Eastern European nations from the Russian grip.

Steven says. It was felt that the best way to get the people to revolt would be to replace the "Liberal" Communists then in control of their countries with hard-line Stalinists, who would be so oppressive the people would rise up.

Splinter Factor, Steven says, was designed to denounce the Liberals as spies, forcing the Stalinist crackdown and the subsequent revolt.

By 1950, Steven writes, "Those . . . who knew about operation Splinter Factor were satisfied that it was working as well as — and indeed better than — anyone had hoped . . . life inside the Communist bloc was becoming increasingly difficult. The

Stalinists were in the ascendancy everywhere, and the people were known to be chafing under intolerable political and economic restrictions."

However, Steven goes on, oppression did not bring revolt, but in fact delayed it until the pressure was eased — the revolts of the 1950s. Also, Splinter Factor, by eliminating the more nationalistic Communists, drove the Eastern European countries more firmly under Russian control.

Steven says his information came chiefly from present and former members of Western and Communist intelligence services. The book is published by Lipincott.